



File Code: 1570
15-02-00-0146-218B

Date: AUG 31 2015

Michael Doherty
Telluride Snowmobile Adventures, LLC
7214 Highway 145
Telluride, Colorado 81435

Dear Mr. Doherty:

On June 15, 2015 you filed a timely objection to the Wilson Peak Land Exchange on the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests. Your objection to the Environmental Assessment (EA), Draft Decision Notice (DDN), and project record has been reviewed in accordance with 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 218. This letter is my written response to your objection as required by 36 CFR 218.11(b)(1).

Project Subject to Objection

The Wilson Peak Land Exchange is a proposal for an exchange between the United States Forest Service and the Trust for Public Land, Skyline Ranch Trust, LLC and Alta Lakes, LLC (proponents), that would convey five separate parcels of non-federal land containing a total of approximately 681 acres to the United States in exchange for four federal properties containing a total of approximately 301 acres to the non-federal party. There will be a \$65,000 cash equalization payment by the United States to establish equal value.

Objection Response

Issue 1: Without a finalized agreement in place with Proponent, Telluride Snowmobile Adventures, LLC (Mr. Doherty) may have to move its base location.

Response: You are in possession of a Special Use Permit (SUP) authorizing an Outfitter Guide operation. During review of the land exchange parcels, it was discovered that your "snow base" was on Federal Parcel 2 in trespass. Prior to the review, the snow base was believed to be on private land owned by the Skyline Ranch (proponent). Your permit specifies that you are to identify boundaries of private land, and that you are responsible for obtaining permission from the private land owners for access across and/or use of private lands (SUP Appendix B, I(J)). Additionally, your permit does not allow permanent improvements (such as power and phone lines) on National Forest System land (SUP I (I) Limitations and II(D) Temporary Improvements; SUP Appendix B, II(E)



Permanent Structures and (F) Temporary Structures), nor is operation of snow base covered in the operations approved in your Forest Service SUP.

The District has been involved in an attempt to locate a suitable snow base (Inspection Form, June 2014) that would enable you to continue your operations. A suitable permanent snow base location has not been identified, and a location on National Forest System land may not be possible. The land exchange proponent has agreed, by letter dated June 29, 2015, to allow the snow base of operations to remain in the current location on Parcel 2 through the 2016-2017 season.

Conclusion:

Based on my review of your objection, the Environmental Assessment and objection record, I find no violation of law, regulation or policy. In addition, my review has led me to conclude that no changes to the analysis documents or Decision Notice are needed with respect to your objection. By copy of this letter, I am instructing the Responsible Official, Scott Armentrout, to proceed with the issuance of the Decision Notice. This response is not subject to further administrative review by the Forest Service or the Department of Agriculture pursuant to 36 CFR 218.11(b)(2).

Sincerely,



MARIBETH GUSTAFSON
Deputy Regional Forester
Reviewing Officer

cc: Scott Armentrout, Corey Wong, Judy Schutza, Nancy Miller